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slings of banana-fibre with a base of the heavy spathes of the areca-palm) and set off for the taro gardens, or they may tie round their waists the little baskets which they use to catch fish in the rock-pools or to store the shell-fish they collect from the reef at low tide. Almost every day a small party goes off on a bartering expedition, to meet the women from some other village with goods for exchange. The more energetic of the men will be flourishing bush-knives or fishing-rods; one may seize a spear and announce his intention of going to hunt wild pig, to the huge delight of all the dogs in the village, who signify their approval in the usual canine fashion, and there is no peace in the village till he has disappeared with them into the bush. A party may be told off to work on the government road in order to keep it in sufficiently good condition to avoid a scolding from the A.D.O. on his next visit. Eventually, most people go off somewhere, either to work or to laze, unless there is a house being built or a canoe being finished, in which case some of the men will set to work on it, in rather desultory fashion. The boys wearing the *upi* depart in a gang on some ploy of their own, the girls have either gone with their mothers or are left to look after the younger children, and usually one or two adults also remain in the village, having chosen not to work to-day. They do not like prolonged concentration on anything, and if I ask somebody, especially a young man, what he is going to do to-day, I shall very likely get the answer: 'Nothing, I worked yesterday.' There would seem really to be some justification for the universal complaint of the older men that the young men nowadays are lazy! The women do not bring back from the taro garden enough provender for more than a day or two at a time, so they cannot take as many 'days off' as their menfolk do. The very few really industrious families have probably built themselves a shelter of banana leaves beside their taro patch, and will not come near the village for days together. Those who remain in the village spend a good part of the day in sleep. Women with small babies, or minding those old enough to be left by their mothers, sit about on the back verandah or on prostrate logs, fondling the infants. For a time, in the early afternoon, the village is quiet.

In course of time the women come back with their baskets of shell-fish or their loads of taro or firewood, carried on their backs as we carry a rucksack. The little girls go off to the water-pools in the bush and return with the family's water-supply—for all purposes—in a dozen or so cleaned-out coco-nut shells.

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137 824 for thatching huts, yet these people do not normally use the pith to make into sago such as is eaten by natives of other parts of the Pacific (Codrington, 1891, p. 320). They neither ate nor prepared any sago while I was with them, and on my questioning them about it said it was eaten only in times of scarcity, when the taro crop had failed. Their distaste for it in normal times is probably due partly to the trouble of preparing it, but also perhaps to the fact that they have already a more than sufficient supply of starch, of which sago contains a high percentage.

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In general it seems justifiable to say that the diet of these people is not seriously defective either in quality or in quantity. From the standpoint of our own eclectic taste, it is somewhat lacking in variety, but this does not seem to trouble the native overmuch, although he is quick to appreciate unaccustomed additions, such as canarium almonds, when they are available. It will be noted that under the climatic conditions here obtaining, where the staple foods can be procured all the year round, the comment made by Dr. Richards (1932, p. 164) in discussing this question—that the diet of the savage, though monotonous during any one season, is subject to the most drastic changes, not only in quantity but also in quality, in the course of the year—hardly applies. The quality of the food of the Bougainville native remains approximately the same throughout the year; the quantity varies, not regularly with the seasons but sporadically with the occurrence of ceremonial occasions, during which, if at no other time, he gets as much to eat as his heart could wish for, and more than his stomach can conveniently hold.

WATER-SUPPLY

● 312 The villages in the mountains are well supplied with excellent water from streams, but the water-supply constitutes a very real problem in the case of the coast villages of N. Bougainville, except those fortunate enough to be situated near the mouths of the few rivers which run to the sea on the north coast. These are confined to its eastern portion. The people of the western part of the north coast are dependent upon the small pools which are found sporadically in the bush, and this supply they share with dogs, pigs, tadpoles, decayed matter, and all the other denizens of stagnant water in deep shade. A certain amount of decidedly brackish water can also be obtained by digging holes on the shore at low tide, to catch

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PLATE 36

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a. GETTING WATER

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b. CARRYING WATER

[Facing p. 288]

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the seepings which run down the cliffs and percolate through the sand towards the sea.

It is the duty of the women, particularly the younger women and girls, to bring in the water in the morning and again about sunset (Pl. 36*b*). It is carried in coco-nut shells cleaned out for the purpose through one of the eyes. The outside of such shells is often polished by continual rubbing, and may be ornamented with seeds or shells stuck in with the 'putty nut'. They are always carefully rinsed before being filled. The hole is plugged with a stopper (*pipip*) made of a smooth leaf (of the plant called *gartan*) by folding it in an ingenious manner round the finger and tucking the ends in. These water-containers (Pl. 36*a*) are called *ruin*; the same word is used for fresh water generally and also means a stream. They are never used for sea-water, which is usually transported in lengths of bamboo (Pl 37*a*). I have known men from the mountains walk many miles to the sea in order to fill as many of these bamboos as they could carry back with them, this being their only means of obtaining salt.

Ten or a dozen water coco-nuts will carry home the family's supply for the day. Not much of it is expended on personal cleanliness, but I have sometimes seen babies being washed by having the contents of one of the coco-nuts poured over them. Most of it is used for cooking, chiefly for boiling taro. These people do not, as a rule, drink at meal-times, but will take a draught from one of the coco-nuts some little time after eating. Water will sometimes be carried to the taro gardens for consumption in the course of the day's work, but the liquid from a green coco-nut is more often drunk on such occasions, being usually obtainable in the locality. One could not want a more refreshing drink, since the shell and the thick outer sheath keep the liquid cool under the hottest sun. On the whole they seem to drink comparatively little, especially considering the heat of the sun and the starchiness of much of their food. If a person is thirsty while walking through the bush, and cannot obtain coco-nuts, he will search for a special kind of plant with a leaf similar to that of a banana, the native name of which is *oban*. It grows in clumps, a number of rather thin stems close together. Their colour is greenish streaked with brown. By making a vertical slit in one of these stems a spurt of watery liquid will be obtained, with which, by putting the mouth close to the cut, thirst can be most refreshingly assuaged. There is another taller